Assessing the intensity of language contact between Middle Dutch and Scots in late medieval Aberdeen[1]

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1 Introduction

'Linguistic migration', the geographical movement of people and the resulting language contact, is nothing new. As Thomason (2001: 6) points out, languages have been in contact since humans spoke more than one language, for thousands of years. This article will not travel back that far in the history of linguistic migration but discusses the contact between Middle Dutch and Scots in the late Middle Ages. More specifically, this article seeks to assess the intensity of the contact between these languages, based on a) the history of trade connections between Aberdeen and the Low Countries, b) emigration from the Low Countries, and c) Middle Dutch elements in the Aberdeen Council Registers (1398–1511).

The Aberdeen Council Registers (ACR) are Scotland's oldest and most complete run of civic records. The records are preserved from 1398 and continue to be kept today, but we will here focus on the records from 1398 to 1511, which are bound into eight volumes. Despite a gap of almost 20 years due to missing material between 1414 and 1433, the ACR present an important diachronic account of civic life in Aberdeen and Scotland more broadly, recording the proceedings of the town council as well as the bailie, guild and head courts. Disputes between citizens, elections of office bearers, admissions of burgesses, property transfers, cargoes of vessels, rentals of burgh lands, tax rolls and a wealth of other information are documented. Due to their diachronic range and size, the ACR are a valuable source for historic and linguistic research. The first eight volumes (1398–1511) have been transcribed in a Leverhulme-funded project at the University of Aberdeen (Frankot et al. 2019), resulting in a corpus of 1,805,670 tokens.[2] Given the semi-diplomatic approach taken in transcribing these records, linguists must be cautious when using the transcriptions for linguistic analysis.[3]

[1] I thank Dr Edda Frankot (Nord University) and Dr Gijsbert Rutten (University of Leiden) for their help with the Middle Dutch entries of the Aberdeen Council Registers as well as Prof. Viveka Velupillai (Giessen University) for references to metalinguistic comments about the use of Dutch in Shetland. I also thank Prof. Ad Putter (University of Bristol), Dr Jackson Armstrong (University of Aberdeen), and the anonymous reviewer for their feedback and helpful suggestions.

[2] This figure is based on calculations carried out prior to 7 January 2019 and is subject to slight changes due to the editing process thereafter. Tokens were defined as a string of letters or numbers (0-9, a-z, A-Z), so that punctuation marks were not counted as separate tokens, but numbers were.

[3] A description of the editorial principles and structure of the corpus can be found via the following link: https://www.abdn.ac.uk/riiss/documents/ARO_Editorial_principles_2019.pdf

However, the transcriptions allow linguists to analyse the ACR in ways that would be very time-consuming without the digital corpus.

This article focuses on Middle Dutch[4] elements in the ACR. In order to contextualise the use of Middle Dutch, Table 1 provides a more general account of the languages used in these records. An analysis of the matrix language of entries, i.e. the dominant language of an entry (cf. definitions by Myers-Scotton 2002, Auer and Muhamedova 2005, amongst others), reveals the increasing vernacularisation in the ACR, showing when and at what rate the number of entries with Scots as the matrix language increased over time at the expense of Latin.[5] The table below also shows that a number of entries cannot be categorised as either Scots or Latin as there is not one language that is clearly dominant (see "multiple" column in Table 1).[6] The multilingual nature of the ACR is not unusual for late medieval sources. Amongst others, Wright (1998), Trotter (2000), Schendl (2002, 2010), as well as the contributions in Schendl and Wright (2011) and Pahta, Skaffari and Wright (2017) have shown that multilingualism was the norm in late medieval and early modern texts. Particularly the use of and relationship between English, Anglo-Norman, and Latin within texts written in England has been investigated, while less attention has been paid to Dutch and Flemish.[7] The two Middle Dutch entries in volumes 5.2 and 6 of the ACR, which will be discussed in section 4.2, are, therefore, particularly interesting. Of course, we need to keep in mind that the relationship between Latin, as a written language, and Scots was fundamentally different from that between Middle Dutch and Scots, both of which were spoken languages. This article will focus on the latter, without providing comparisons to the written relationship between Scots and Latin.[8]

[4] The term "Middle Dutch" encompasses Dutch and Flemish varieties. As Fleming et al. (2019b: 134) state, "Middle Dutch and Flemish were almost entirely indistinguishable from one another" in the late Middle Ages. Macafee (1997: 204) describes the relationship between Flemish, Dutch, and Low German as a continuum. She states that it is assumed that "the earliest loans [into Scots] are from the Flemish spoken by immigrants to the Lowlands, and the later loans mainly from Dutch. Both of these are sometimes termed Middle Dutch." (ibid. 204f.).

[5] Cf. Havinga (forthcoming) for a more detailed account of these processes.

[6] Cf. Wright (2000) for a discussion on the difficulty of distinguishing between languages in late medieval business writing from England.

[7] See, however, Joby (2015) for a social history of the use of Dutch in early modern Britain (1550–1702) and Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 321–325) for an account of Low Dutch grammatical influence on Middle English.

[8] Cf. Havinga (forthcoming) for a discussion of code-switches between Latin and Scots in the Aberdeen Council Registers.

Table 1: Matrix languages of entries in the ACR (1398–1511)

Volume	Time period	Number of entries	Scots		Latin		Middle Dutch		Multiple	
			n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Vol. 1	1398–1407	2,528	6	0.24	2,508	99.21	0	0	14	0.55
Vol. 2	1408–1414	1,490	9	0.60	1,467	98.46	0	0	14	0.94
Vol. 4	1433–1448	3,755	209	5.57	3,540	94.27	0	0	6	0.16
Vol. 5.1	1448–1468	4,418	317	7.18	4,092	92.62	0	0	9	0.20
Vol. 5.2	1441–1471	1,052	226	21.48	823	78.23	1	0.10	2	0.19
Vol. 6	1466–1486	9,047	2,958	32.70	6,087	67.28	1	0.01	1	0.01
Vol. 7	1487–1501	6,606	3,601	54.51	3,004	45.47	0	0	1	0.02
Vol. 8	1501–1511	5,181	3,310	63.89	1,870	36.09	0	0	1	0.02

The data from the ACR presented in the table above indicate that there was language contact in late medieval Aberdeen. This contact led to “borrowing” or “copying” (cf. Hickey 2013: 18, 20) of words into Scots. Not all words are, however, as easily borrowed as others. Weinreich (1966: 34f.) predicted that unintegrated morphemes, such as interjections, are more easily transferred from one language to another than integrated ones, such as morphemes with complex grammatical functions. Moravcsik (1978, as cited in Matras 2013: 78) adds that semantic autonomy favours borrowability. Lexical items are, therefore, more easily borrowed than non-lexical items, nouns more easily than non-nouns, free morphemes more than bound morphemes, and derivational morphology more than inflectional morphology (Matras 2013: 78). Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 74–76) link the borrowability of items to the intensity of language contact, providing the following borrowing scale, which is presented as a continuum here:

(1) Causal Contact:

no structural borrowing, lexical borrowing only: content words, with non-basic vocabulary being borrowed before basic vocabulary

(2) Slightly more intense contact:

slight structural borrowing (minor phonological, syntactic, and lexical semantic features, causing little or no typological disruption), borrowing of function words (conjunctions and various adverbial particles)

(3) More intense contact:

slightly more structural borrowing than in (2), borrowing of function words (prepositions and postpositions) and derivational affixes, along with basic vocabulary (such as personal pronouns and low numerals)

(4) Strong cultural pressure:

moderate structural borrowing that causes relatively little typological change

(5) Very strong cultural pressure:

heavy structural borrowing that causes significant typological disruption

Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 77) stress that the boundaries between the borrowing categories are not clear cut, which is one reason for presenting them on a continuum above. The crucial point of their borrowing scale is that the intensity of contact affects how much borrowing will occur. The intensity of contact, in turn, is dependent on the following social factors, according to the authors (ibid. 72): a) length of time, b) the number of source-language speakers in relation to the borrowing-language speakers, c) the nature of the contact between source-language speakers and borrowing-language speakers (e.g. socio-political dominance of one group, intermarriage between speakers).

In order to use Thomason and Kaufman's (1988) borrowing scale for an assessment of the contact between Middle Dutch and Scots in Aberdeen it is, therefore, necessary to understand the relationship between immigrants from the Low Countries and the Scottish population first. Their interactions are described in two parts: section 2 focusses on trade connections between Aberdeen and the Low Countries, while section 3 discusses references in the ACR to people hailing from the Low Countries in order to establish when they came to Aberdeen as well as their roles and status in the royal burgh. Section 4 then deals with borrowing from Dutch/Flemish as well as the two Middle Dutch entries in the ACR in order to categorise the intensity of language contact between Scots and Middle Dutch in Aberdeen on Thomason and Kaufman's scale. Despite the historical significance of the ACR, it must be kept in mind that these records can only provide indirect evidence of the linguistic landscape of Aberdeen at the time. Given the lack of metalinguistic comments, these documents do not allow us to establish how ordinary people used language on an everyday basis.[9] The analysis below will, however,

[9] Prof. Viveka Velupillai has discovered such metalinguistic comments from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for Shetland. James Key, minister of Dunrossness (S Shetland), for example, states the following in the 1680s: "The Inhabitants of the South Parish are, for the most part, Strangers from Scotland & Orkney, whose Language, Habit, Manners & Dispositions are almost ye same with the Scotish. […] Their Language (as I said) is the same with the Scotish: yet all the Natives can speak the Gothick or Norwegian Tongue. […] by reason of their Commerce with the Hollanders, generally they promptly speak low Dutch." (Bruce 1908: 43f). Murison (1971:

provide valuable insights into the nature of the language contact between Middle Dutch and Scots.

2 Trade connections between Aberdeen and the Low Countries

By the early fifteenth century, trade links between Scotland and the Low Countries had been well established (Stevenson 1982: 1). Muylaert et al. (2019: 25) state that "commercial links with Flanders became a primary driver of the Scottish economy" after significant numbers of Flemish people came to Scotland after the Norman Conquest of England in 1066. Exports to the Low Countries included wool for the flourishing Flemish cloth industry, hides, sheepskins, fish (salmon, herring and cod), and salt (Stevenson 1982: 1). Stevenson (1982) researched these trade connections between Scotland and the Low Countries in detail, providing a list of the "Netherlandish proportion of Aberdeen's total trade, as suggested by court cases in Aberdeen" (1982: 330), based on an analysis of volumes 4 to 8 of the ACR (see Table 2). The results of his analysis suggest that trade connections between Aberdeen and the Low Countries have been particularly prominent between 1434 to 1489, but they decreased in the last decade of the fifteenth and the first decade of the sixteenth century, judging from the percentage of cases in the records relating to the Low Countries. While these numbers do not provide a full picture of Aberdeen's trade connections, they do highlight the importance of the trade between Aberdeen and the Low Countries.

Table 2: "Netherlandish proportion of Aberdeen's total trade, as suggested by court cases in Aberdeen" (Stevenson 1982: 330)

1434–1439	92 % of	40 cases
1440–1449	65 % of	31 cases
1450–1459	70 % of	48 cases
1460–1469	76 % of	41 cases
1470–1479	66 % of	65 cases
1480–1489	73 % of	110 cases
1490–1499	56 % of	107 cases
1500–1509	29 % of	66 cases

Ditchburn and Harper (2002), too, point out the significance of Aberdeen's trade with the Low Countries. Based on the destination of customed goods, they suggest that trade with other regions is less noteworthy. Trade with the Baltic region developed in the early fifteenth century

175) notes that Shetland is "[t]he one part of Scotland which has had continuous close and direct contact with the Dutch in the last three hundred years". Since the nature of contact is different to that of other parts of Scotland, it will not be discussed any further here.

but remained occasional, and there is little evidence of trade with Scandinavia before the late fifteenth century, when Norway's export of timber became more substantial (ibid. 390). Ditchburn and Harper (ibid.) do, however, stress that the destination of customed goods may not "provide a complete picture of the town's overseas contacts". Nevertheless, there is evidence that Aberdeen's connections to the Low Countries is more significant than that to other regions. Stevenson (1982: 330) lists references to overseas trade in volumes 4 to 8 of the ACR. The references to Flanders, Flemish money, Holland, Zeeland, and Brabant far outnumber references to Germany and the Baltic, England, France and Brittany, as well as Scandinavia (see Table 3).

Table 3: Stevenson's (1982: 330) list of references to overseas trade in the ACR (volumes 4–8)

	Fl	Flm	H	Z	B	G	Gm	E	Em	F	Fm	N
1434-9	16	19	1	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
1440-9	13	4	1	0	2	2	1	5	1	2	0	0
1450-9	20	5	3	4	1	1	0	8	2	2	0	1
1460-9	12	6	3	10	0	3	0	2	1	2	2	0
1470-9	14	13	3	8	5	15	0	2	3	2	0	0
1480-9	35	29	2	14	0	16	3	3	4	3	0	1
1490-9	17	28	2	13	0	13	1	4	3	20	5	1
1500-9	6	2	2	8	1	4	0	3	4	15	20	1
Total	**323**					**61**		**46**		**73**		**4**

Fl = Flanders, Flm = Flemish money, H = Holland, Z = Zeeland, B = Brabant
G = Germany & the Baltic, Gm = German money
E = England, Em = English money
F = France & Brittany, Fm = French money
N = Norway & Denmark

Stevenson's quantitative analyses also show that references to Flanders and Zeeland are more common than references to Holland and Brabant. Ditchburn and Harper (2002: 378, 386–388) state that within the Low Countries, there were markets for Aberdeen's principal exports of wool, leather, and fish in Bergen-op-Zoom and Antwerp (both in Brabant), Bruges (and its port of Sluis, Flanders), and Middelburg as well as Veere (Zeeland), amongst a few others. Jackson (2002: 160) states that there was a Scottish staple in the Low Countries, which was located at Bruges, Middelburg, and, from 1508, at Veere. Macafee (1997: 205) notes that this was the only Scottish staple port abroad from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century, further highlighting the importance of the trade links between Scotland and the Low Countries. In order to establish which trade connections between Aberdeen and specific towns in the Low

Countries were particularly salient, individual place names were searched for in the ACR. This revealed that Bergen-op-Zoom (Brabant) was never mentioned in the records. Antwerp (Brabant) and Middelburg (Zeeland) only occur occasionally (six and three times respectively). Veere (or Campvere as it was also known) in Zeeland, on the other hand, appears 35 times and Bruges (and its port Sluis) are mentioned most frequently (54 times). In line with Stevenson's (1982: 330) analysis, this indicates that trade connections to Bruges in Flanders, followed by Veere in Zeeland were particularly salient. Furthermore, it seems that connections to Bruges and Antwerp were established earlier than those to Veere. In the ACR, the first references to Bruges, Sluis, and Antwerp can be found in 1434, while Veere (usually spelled <feir'> or <feire>) is first mentioned in 1459. Interestingly, none of these places are mentioned in the first two volumes of the ACR (1398–1414). This does, however, not mean that there were no connections to the Low Countries before the 1430s. As the following section will show, people from the Low Countries came to Aberdeen earlier on.

3 People from the Low Countries in Aberdeen

As mentioned in the previous section, it was after the Norman Conquest in 1066 that a considerable number of Flemish people migrated to Britain. The reign of David I in Scotland (1124–1153) and his ideas of social and economic transformation through the foundation of royal burghs with exclusive trading privileges led to Flemish immigration to Scotland more specifically (Muylaert et al. 2019: 29, Fleming and Rigg 2019: 46). Corbett et al. (2003: 7) describe these burghs as "magnets for immigrants" from Flanders, the Rhineland, northern France, and England. After Henry II of England expelled Flemish mercenaries for insurrection in 1154, many of them came to Scotland and closer relations developed (Murison 1971: 160). The period from 1300 and 1500 saw further emigration from Flanders, mainly due to a relative economic decline and stagnation in Flanders, which, however, did not lead to the collapse of Flanders as an economically powerful region (Muylaert et al. 2019: 26). Other factors for the Flemish migration to Britain were overpopulation and the resulting shortage of land as well as famines and floods (ibid.). Naturally, there were also aspects which made Scotland attractive to Flemish migrants, such as the growth of the wool trade and the rich fishing grounds (ibid. 28, Fleming et al. 2019a: 55). While the first Flemish migrants belonged to noble classes, there were also non-elite migrants, such as the nobility's servants, soldiers and craftsmen, as well as skilled agricultural workers and merchants coming to Britain (Muylaert et al. 2019: 26–28). In

fact, “Flemish craftsmen were encouraged to immigrate [to Scotland], and they formed small enclaves (seen in such place-names as Flemington, of which there are four in Scotland) or settled in the burghs, where they played a prominent part in public life”, according to Macafee (1997: 205). In order to establish when people of Dutch or Flemish origin came to Aberdeen and what parts they played in the royal burgh, the Aberdeen Council Registers were searched for specific references to people from the Low Countries.

English et al. (2019: 139) explain that “hereditary surnames began to develop in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, first among landowners and then more widely among other social groups”. This convention of passing on the surname from father to son seems to have been well established in Scotland by the fifteenth century. English et al. (2019: 139f.) also comment on the different types of surnames that developed, which can be grouped into four categories: locational (e.g. Fleming), occupational (e.g. Hunter), family surnames (e.g. Robertson), and surnames based on personal characteristics (e.g. Brown). Of these, locational surnames, which include ethnic or national designations (e.g. Scot), “accounted for up to 50% of all surnames in many areas”, according to English et al. (2019: 140). English et al. (ibid.) also note that locational surnames were typical among members of the elite, while people of lower social status more commonly adopted occupational or family surnames. This section, which does not aim to capture all references to people hailing from the Low Countries in the ACR, focuses on certain locational surnames as they provide the clearest indication of national designation.

Since the term ‘Dutchmen’ could refer to either Dutch or German speakers and occurred just eight times in volumes 2–8 of the ACR, the analysis focused on references to Flemish people and ‘Flemings’. As Oksanen (2019: 20) points out, a ‘Fleming’ was not necessarily from Flanders; the term was historically used to indicate a supra-regional identity, referring to “a range of peoples across the Low Countries”. Of course, not all immigrants from the Low Countries would adopt the surname ‘Fleming’. English et al. (2019: 143) state that there were more Flemish immigrants with a surname other than Fleming. The surnames ‘Brebner’ (or ‘Brabner’, referring to a native of Brabant) and ‘Crab’ are two examples of names of Flemish origin, according to Black (1946: 100, 178). Both are common in the Aberdeen Council Registers. However, ‘Brabner’ only occurs in volumes 6 to 8. With regard to ‘Crab’, Black (1946: 178) notes that “[t]he first of the name of prominence was Paul Crab, in Aberdeen, 1310”. Black (ibid.) states that John Crab (possibly Paul Crab’s son) became a burgess of Aberdeen and, in 1357, was, amongst others, appointed to treat for the ransom of David II. In other words, John Crab was assigned central roles in the royal burgh. Black also informs us that John Crab granted a charter in favour of his son, Paul Crab, in 1384. Given John Crab’s

important roles and his seemingly solid integration into Aberdeen's civic life, it is difficult to know whether he or any of the people carrying this surname who are mentioned in the ACR from 1398 onwards still identified with the Low Countries or spoke Middle Dutch. Görlach (2002: 22) argues that the number of immigrants from the Netherlands between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries were "too small and their geographical dispersal too wide to allow them to hand on their languages to succeeding generations". Similarly, not all people with the surname 'Fleming' were necessarily Middle Dutch speakers. A Scot may, for example, adopt the name 'Fleming' when residing and working for a landowner named Fleming (English et al. 2019: 144). It should also be noted that not all people with this surname, which was in use as a hereditary surname in Scotland by the late thirteenth century (ibid. 143), were related to each other (cf. Black 1946: 268), i.e. this surname has multiple origins (English et al. 2019: 144). The surname 'Fleming', therefore, does not capture all Middle Dutch-speaking people in Scotland and may include references to non-Middle Dutch speakers. However, in contrast to 'Crab' and 'Brabner', 'Fleming' was also used as demonym after the surname (see below) to identify certain people as Flemish. The term 'Fleming' does, therefore, provide at least some indication of people originally hailing from the Low Countries and seems more suitable for analysis than other surnames of Flemish origin.

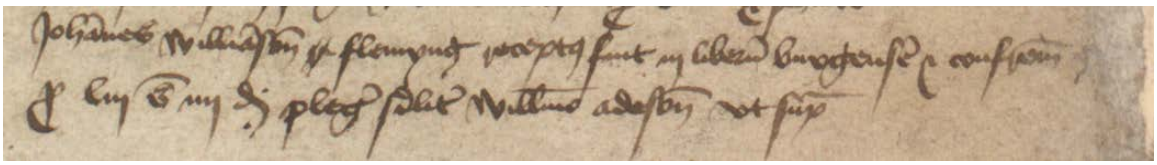
References to 'Flemings' can be found in the ACR from 1399 onwards, providing evidence that links between Aberdeen and the Low Countries had been established by the end of the fourteenth century. However, these references do not reveal whether these Flemish people resided in Aberdeen temporarily or more permanently. Frankot (2017a: 414) notes that "a large Flemish community had settled in Scotland" by the 1170s, but does not refer to a Flemish community in Aberdeen specifically. Similarly, Muylaert et al. (2019: 30) state that "Flemish merchants and craftsmen were encouraged to settle in the Scottish burghs" founded by David I, mentioning St Andrews specifically but not Aberdeen. Murison (1971: 161) reports on an enclave of Flemings in the Garioch in Aberdeenshire, attested by the place-name Flinders as well as a series of fourteenth-century charters from David II, but it remains unclear whether a permanent community of Middle Dutch speakers settled in Aberdeen itself in the Middle Ages.

There is, however, evidence for contact between Aberdonians and Flemings. In the first eight volumes of the ACR, Flemings are mentioned in 29 entries, referring to 26 different people with some connection to the Low Countries.[10] While there are usually no clear

[10] Multiple references to the same person within the same entry were just counted once. Three of the same Flemings are mentioned in two different entries each and two other Flemings are mentioned in three different entries. Twice, the term 'Fleming' is used in plural to refer to two 'Flemings'.

indications of their more general roles or professions (e.g. merchants, captains of ships, craftsmen etc.), the ACR reveal that these people were involved in the Aberdeen court business as victims, accused or convicted perpetrators, witnesses, transaction partners, and one Fleming (similar to John Crab mentioned above) was admitted as a burgess. This admission was prestigious and not available to just anyone. As Frankot (2017b) notes, new burgesses were admitted to the town each year, usually either because they were sons of burgesses, or because they were married to a burgess's daughter and able to pay a fee.[11] The latter seems to have been the case for the Fleming Johannes Williamson, who was admitted as a burgess and guild member in the administrative year 1456–1457, since the payment of the fee is recorded in the entry:

> Johannes Williamson' ⁋ flemyng receptus fuit in liberum burgensem et confratrem g[ilde] pro liij s' iiij d' plegio similiter Willelmo adeson' vt supra (ARO-5-0796-11)[12]



This suggests that intermarriage between Aberdonians and Flemish people did occur and that people originally hailing from the Low Countries were able to fully integrate into Aberdonian society. Indeed, in the entry above, it appears as if the word "flemyng" was almost left out, with the grapheme <r> as the initial letter of "receptus" being deleted in front of "flemyng". Brown (2019: 149) claims that "Flemish migrants to Scotland became assimilated into the economic, social and cultural fabric of their host country" quickly. He describes the integration and absorption of Flemish people as "peaceful", noting that there is little evidence to suggest that the local population was hostile towards Flemish immigrants. This, according to Brown (2019: 150), led to the disappearance of a separate Flemish identity by the beginning of the thirteenth century in Scotland and elsewhere in Britain, and presumably also to language shift from Middle Dutch to Scots for individual speakers. On the other hand, at least some people with Flemish origins either identified themselves or were identified as "Fleming" in the 1450s, as the entry from the ACR above shows.

While references to "Flemings" cannot be used as evidence for Middle Dutch speakers, it can be concluded that at least a number of people with links to the Low Countries kept a

[11] There are a few cases where men have been admitted for other reasons, such as for their skills or crafts (see Frankot (2017b) for specific examples).
[12] Translation: Johannes Williamson, a Fleming, was received as a free burgess and guild brother for 53 s' 4 d' by the pledge of William Adeson' as above.

separate identity or were identified as separate. The entry above and references to the Crab family also reveal that some of these people played an important part in the civic life of Aberdeen since at least the fourteenth century. The following section will provide linguistic evidence for these contacts between people from the Low Countries and Scotland.

4 The influence of Middle Dutch on Scots

Scots has essentially developed from varieties of Old English and contact with other languages. With regard to lexis, Macafee (1997) provides the results of an analysis of the sources of a random sampling of one word in forty from the volumes of the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* (DOST) published at the time. Of this sample of 982 items, which includes originals, derivatives, and compounds, 340 words (34.6 %) originate from Old English, 459 (46.7 %) from Romance languages (with words of French origin being most frequent), and 82 words (8.4 %) from Scandinavian languages (Macafee 1997: 190). Words of Flemish, Dutch, or Low German origin were grouped together by Macafee and constitute merely 2.2 % (22 items) of the sample, but their contribution to the vocabulary of Older Scots is higher than that of Celtic languages (8 items, i.e. 0.8 %) in Macafee's sample.[13] Given the relative minor role that Flemish, Dutch, and Low German seem to have played in the composition of Older Scots lexis, it may not be surprising that the influence of Middle Dutch on Scots is not a particularly well-researched topic. One of the most-cited articles on the subject is Murison's (1971) list of fourteenth to eighteenth-century Dutch loan words in Scots, which are divided into nine semantic fields: agriculture, trade, cloth, weight and measure, coinage, games, sea and ships, war and weapons, miscellaneous. Excluding Middle Dutch lexical items that have also been borrowed into English, Murison records 171 words of Dutch or Flemish origin that have been borrowed into Scots, with the earliest ones being traced back to the fourteenth century. Most of these loan words (75 out of 171) belong to the miscellaneous category and the majority are nouns (130 out of 171). While Murison admits that it is not always easy to distinguish Dutch or Flemish from Low German loan words[14] and that his lists are incomplete, he concludes that the loan words he lists "show the great and lasting influence of the Low Countries, especially Flanders and Holland, on the speech and culture of Scotland […]" (ibid. 176). Tulloch (1997:

[13] The remaining 71 items are categorized into Greek (1 item), Anglicised (3), multiple (9), onomatopoeic (7), proper names (8) and unknown (43).
[14] See, for example, *spean* [to wean], which Murison first classifies as Flemish loan word (from Flem. *spenen*) but about which he then writes that "a Low German origin is also possible, if not more probable" (Murison 1971: 165).

395), too, describes the linguistic influence of Dutch, Flemish, and Low German on Scots as "profound". Similarly, Fleming et al. (2019b: 133f.) claim that Flemish had a lasting impact on the Scots language, suggesting that the immigration of the Flemish to Scotland contributed to the divergence between Scots and English as well as the use of Scots rather than Gaelic.

> The lasting impact of the Flemish on the Scots language goes far beyond the embedding of some Flemish-derived words in the Scots vocabulary. The divergence of the sister languages of Scots and English from their common roots is not only concurrent with, but can be to no small extent attributed to, the first influx of Flemish immigrants to Scotland, and their subsequent influence on the language and culture of those parts of the country in which they settled. […] The divergence of a language variety requires the establishment of a distinct lexicon, invariably incorporating 'loan words' acquired via trade and immigration. The twelfth century marks the beginning of a discernible shift away from Northumbrian English, which also coincides with Henry II's expulsion of the Flemish from England in 1154. When these Flemish moved across the Scottish border they settled in significant numbers in the south and the east of Scotland. These are areas in which English had been the primary language, and Scots shortly would be. There can be little doubt that this influx, and the easily importable vocabulary of Flemish terms relating to industry and trade, contributed significantly to the formation of the Scots language. Indeed, the broader economic and cultural impact of the Flemish on Scotland had no small role to play in the wider changes which were to see Scots, rather than Gaelic, established as the language of status and of the state in Scotland." (Fleming et al. 2019b: 133f.)

There is no question about Dutch and Flemish loan words contributing to the lexicon of Scots. It is also interesting to note that the direct borrowings from Middle Dutch (as well as Anglo-Norman) into Scots were independent from the influence of these languages in England (Macafee 1997: 201), which contributed to the divergence between English and Scots. Furthermore, Macafee (1997: 205) believes that "Flemish speakers in the early Scottish burghs would have added their weight to the restoration of non-palatalised forms of words like *kirk*". In addition, Murison (1971: 175) states that the Scots diminutive suffice *-ie* may have become more widely used in the seventeenth century due to its similarity to Dutch *-je*, which is etymologically distinct but also became common at that time. Görlach (2002: 127), on the other hand, states that the lexical impact of the contacts between Scots and Dutch (as well as Low German) are "sometimes rated quite high", despite the fact that they are "restricted to a few words in General Scots […] and many more in the special jargon of fishing". Aitken (1985, 2015) acknowledges the close links between Scotland and the Low Countries, which resulted in various loan words, but he does not attribute any special significance to them in comparison to loan words originating in other languages, such as French, Gaelic, and Anglo-Saxon. Instead, Aitken (ibid.) ascribes the greatest contribution to the formation of what later became Scots to

the “Scandinavianised Northern English” or Anglo-Danish. Similarly, Corbett et al. (2003: 7) note that “Scots developed from an extended and complicated period of immigration and language contact”, including contact with skilled Dutch- or Flemish-speaking settlers, but this is merely one of the migrant groups who had some impact on Scots. According to Corbett et al. (ibid. 15), “[b]road Scots was born of a fusion of Anglo-Scandinavian, French, Latin, Gaelic and Dutch”. Comparatively, then, Middle Dutch does not appear to be any more impactful than other contact languages.

In order to assess the influence of Middle Dutch on Scots more carefully, I am drawing on Thomason and Kaufman’s (1988) borrowing scale (see section 1) and the social context of contact between people from the Low Countries and Scotland provided in sections 2 and 3. Murison’s (1971) list of Middle Dutch loan words, the frequency of their occurrence and the two Middle Dutch entries in the ACR will be taken into account when evaluating the intensity of language contact between Middle Dutch and Scots in Aberdeen.

4.1 Middle Dutch loan words in the Aberdeen Council Registers (1398–1511)

While lists of Dutch and Flemish loan words could be found in various secondary literature, instances of structural borrowing from Middle Dutch to Scots are rare. This may be due to the fact that Scots and Middle Dutch are closely related, which may limit the scope for grammatical influence on Scots (cf. Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 323). The only suggestion of some structural borrowing is provided by Murison (1971: 172), who hypothesises that the Flemings in Scotland may have had an influence on the tendency of forming compounds with an adverb or conjunction as a prefix (e.g. ‘upmake’ for *to make up*) in Scots, which is less common in English. There is no evidence of phonological borrowing leading to the introduction of new distinctive features in contrastive sets or loss of contrasts. There was also no strong cultural pressure for people in Scotland to become bilingual in Scots and Middle Dutch and to adopt Dutch or Flemish elements. On the contrary, it seems that immigrants from the Low Countries integrated quickly into Scottish society, probably becoming fluent in Scots early on. We can, therefore, rule out categories 4 and 5 of Thomason and Kaufman’s (1988) borrowing scale. This leaves us with a scale from casual contact (category 1 – lexical borrowing only) to more intense contact (category 3 – some structural borrowing).

For casual contact, Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 77) specify that there is no widespread bilingualism among borrowing-language speakers in these situations and only non-basic

content words are borrowed, without any structural borrowing occurring.[15] In other words, Scots speakers would not be fluent in Middle Dutch in casual contact situations. Thomason (2001: 70) adds that mostly nouns, but also verbs, adjectives, and adverbs are borrowed in such situations. In slightly more intense contact situations (category 2 of Thomason and Kaufman's borrowing scale), also function words (conjunctions, adverbial particles) are borrowed and there is some minor structural borrowing. In more intense contact situation (category 3), we can observe slightly more structural borrowing along with borrowing of basic vocabulary and more function words, such as adpositions and derivational affixes.

On Murison's (1971) list of 171 loan words, which is the most detailed account of the lexical influence of Middle Dutch on Scots, we can only find content words, the majority of which are nouns, which are most easily borrowed: 130 nouns (N), 30 verbs (V), seven adjectives (Adj.), one adverb (Adv.), one interjection (Interj.), and two words that have been borrowed as nouns and verbs (N + V). This distribution is in line with Haugen's (1950: 224) findings based on his research on Norwegian and Swedish immigrant speech in the US, which show that more nouns than verbs are borrowed, more verbs than adjectives, and more adjectives than adverbs and interjections. It is also interesting to note when different word classes were borrowed. Table 4 is based on Murison's (1971) list and provides a diachronic view of the number of Middle Dutch loan words.[16]

Table 4: Diachronic view of the number of Middle Dutch loan words, categorised into word classes, based on Murison's (1971) list

Century	**N**	**V**	**N + V**	**Adj.**	**Adv.**	**Interj.**	**Total**
14th C.	9						9
15th C.	48	10	1				59
16th C.	41	6	1	2	1		51
17th C.	13	2		1			16
18th C.	19	12		4		1	36
Total	**130**	**30**	**2**	**7**	**1**	**1**	**171**

[15] Thomason (2001: 71f.) refers to Morris Swadesh' lists of basic vocabulary items to distinguish between basic and non-basic loan words. In order to study the relatedness between languages, Swadesh set out to only include words in these lists "that are unlikely to be borrowed because they can be expected to be present already in every language, so that no language will 'need' new words for the relevant concepts" (ibid. 72). According to Swadesh (1972: 283), there are 100 basic words that do "not feel any pressure to change or to resist change".

[16] Murison does not explicitly disclose his method of dating. He notes that his list is based on J. F. Bense's *Dictionary of the Low-Dutch Element in the English Vocabulary* (1926–38) as well as material from *A Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* and *The Scottish National Dictionary* available at the time. Murison's (1971: 164) statement that he will "examine the influence of the language of the Netherlands, *ie* Middle and Modern Dutch, on the vocabulary of Scots from the earliest period from which it can be traced in the fourteenth century, to the latest in which it ceased, in the early eighteenth […]" suggests that he set out to record the loan words' earliest occurrences, resulting in their categorisation into different centuries.

It is unsurprising that only nouns were borrowed in the fourteenth century, when links to the Low Countries were relatively recent. While the majority of Middle Dutch loan words first appear in the fifteenth century, adjectives and adverbs are only borrowed from the sixteenth century onwards, which confirms that a longer and/or more intense contact is necessary for these lexical classes to be borrowed. Only two basic loan words from Middle Dutch can be found on Murison's list: 'crag' for neck[17] and 'smook' for both the noun and verb smoke. It is rather surprising that these two words can be traced back to the fourteenth century, when 'crag' is first attested, and the fifteenth century, when 'smook' first appears in written sources. This suggests that the contact between Middle Dutch and Scots was already quite intense in the fourteenth century if we follow the premises of Thomason and Kaufman's (1988: 74f.) borrowing scale.

It must be kept in mind that Murison's list excludes Middle Dutch loan words that were borrowed into English as well as Scots. However, based on his research of the influence of Low Dutch on English lexis, Llewellyn (1936), too, only lists content words in his extensive lists of Dutch, Flemish, and Low German loan words.[18] Both Llewellyn and Murison provide a range of rather specialised non-basic lexical items, which raises the question of how frequently these words were used. In order to answer this question, the fourteenth and fifteenth-century words from Murison's list were searched for in the first eight volumes of the ACR, taking different spelling variants into account. Given the variety of ways an individual word could be spelled at the time, the context of each hit was checked to ensure that the hit generated by the search engine referred to the correct meaning of the loan word.[19] The words from Murison's list were also checked in the *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (DSL) in order to find spelling variants that were not suggested by the search engine and to check the etymology supplied by Murison. Words of obscure origin or words that could have originating in languages other than Middle Dutch according to the DSL were excluded from the search.[20] Furthermore, four words that only occur after about 1600 according to the DSL and that could

[17] Alternatively, 'nek' or 'neck' from Old English *hnecca* was used in Scots (cf. https://dsl.ac.uk/entry/dost/nek_n_1).

[18] Low Dutch also had some grammatical influence on certain dialects of Middle English, where a Low Dutch pronoun form was used as the enclitic/unstressed object form of 'she' and 'they' (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 321–325). This form was, however, not used in Scots.

[19] For example, spelling variants of *steke* meaning a piece or a coin (see below), which is usually spelled <stik> in the ACR, overlap with the lexical item *stik* referring to a stick.

[20] Words of obscure origin are 'copy' (a kind of cloth) and 'eik' (grease in wool). Words that could have developed or could have been borrowed from other languages, such as Old English or Old French, are 'maise' (a measure of herring), 'waw' (a measure of weight), and 'smoor' (to suffocate).

not be found in the ACR were excluded.[21] This reduced the overall number of fourteenth and fifteenth-century words from 68 to 59 (see Table 5, which also lists the number of types as well as tokens of individual lexical items found in the ACR).

Table 5: Number of words from Murison's list found in the ACR (1398–1511)

Total number of words on Murison's list for 14th and 15th C.		**Number of words after exclusions (see above)**	**Words found in ACR: types**	**Words found in ACR: tokens**
Agriculture	3	3	0	0
Trade	15	15	4	22
Cloth	7	5	3	3
Weights & Measure	6	4	1	1
Coinage	5	5	5	47
Games	4	4	0	0
Sea & Ships	2	2	0	0
War & Weapons	1	0	0	0
Miscellaneous	25	21	5	30
Total	**68**	**59**	**18**	**103**

The table above shows that Middle Dutch loan words of certain semantic fields are more common (coinage, trade) than others (weights and measures), while lexical items from certain areas do not occur at all in the ACR (agriculture, games, sea and ship, war and weapons). This result is not surprising. Murison (1971: 165) notes that "the influence of Dutch on Scottish agriculture is very small, sporadic and specialised". The two Middle Dutch loan words relating to ships, too, are highly specialised: 'lek' for a bolt-rope of a sail and 'mers' for a round-top on a mast. Games were unlikely to be mentioned in legal records, and the only loan word relating to war and weapons on Murison's list occurs after 1700, according to the DSL. Looking at specific words that do occur and the year of their occurrence allows us to establish when specific loan words were in use in the ACR.

All the coinage terms of Flemish and Dutch origin listed by Murison occur in the ACR. Most frequent is the term 'steke' (from Flemish and/or Low German *stik*, *stuk*, or Dutch *stuk*, meaning a piece), which can either refer to a coin, a piece or item of goods, or a length of cloth in the fifteenth century.[22] Indeed, the use of 'steke' to refer to a piece or length of an item, such as *ane Stik of clath* (1501, ARO-7-1112-02), is more common than references to coins. In total, this term occurs 19 times in the ACR, with the first example being found in 1434 (*twa uthir stikkis of wyne*, ARO-4-0003-06) and the last in 1511 (*ane stik of chamlate*, ARO-8-1173-02).

[21] These were 'wapenschaw' (part of routine military drill), 'flindrikin' (a frivolous person), 'rumple' (a crease, wrinkle), and 'yuke' (to itch).
[22] Cf. the entry for 'Steke' in the DSL: https://dsl.ac.uk/entry/dost/steke_n.

Given its diachronic range and its frequency, this particular loan word appears to be well established. The word 'lew' for a Flemish or Dutch gold coin is also relatively frequent, occurring 14 times between 1482 and 1508. In contrast to 'steke', this lexical item does not occur prior to volume 6. The other three coinage terms appear less frequently: 'plack' (a coin of James III, who was King of Scotland from 1460 to 1488) occurs seven times in the years 1485, 1486, and 1506; 'rider' (a gold coin of James II, whose queen was Dutch and who reigned from 1437 to 1460) appears four times (1482, 1484, 1506) and 'gulden' (a Dutch guilder) can be found three times (1461, 1462, 1510). It seems that Middle Dutch coinage terms, which are more frequent than other loan words in the ACR, became more common in the 1480s.

Similarly, terms relating to trade appear more frequently towards the end of the fifteenth century. Relatively common is the term 'los', meaning to discharge cargo. The earliest occurrence can be found in 1447: *and lossit the said schip of diuers' gudes* (ARO-4-0495-04)[23], with ten further occurrences between 1456 and 1489. The term 'piner' appears seven times between 1497 and 1511 to refer to porters or labourers more generally (e.g. in statutes). However, in combination with names, this term is used more frequently and earlier on. The first mention of *pynour* as a surname can be found in 1410 (*Andree pynour*), while later entries (24 between 1451 and 1467) refer to *Johannes henrison pinour'* (1451), *Johanne henrici le pynour*' (1464) or *Johne's henryson' the pynour*' (1467), presumably denoting the same person. Based solely on the evidence from the ACR, it seems that this loan word was first used as a surname before being adopted to refer to porters or labourers more generally.[24] Merely two other loan words relating to trade from Murison's list can be found: 'kip' (i.e. a bundle) occurs three times (1447, 1494, 1508)[25] and 'oncost' (i.e. overheads, additional expenses) appears just once in 1496: *that fraucht and vncost being allouit* (ARO-7-0715-02).[26]

Overall, 69 tokens (excluding the term 'piner' in combination with surnames) of Middle Dutch loan words relating to trade and coinage were found in the ACR corpus of 1,805,670 tokens, which equates to 0.004 % of the overall corpus. Given the close trade links between Aberdeen and the Low Countries one might expect loan words relating to trade to occur more frequently. Coinage terms are, however, the most frequent Middle Dutch loan words in the

[23] The use of abbreviation marks or flourishes is common in Older Scots. In the transcription of the Aberdeen Council Registers, these were indicated with apostrophes when the word already appeared to be complete or when it was understandable without any further additions, such as *diuers'* or *pinour'*.
[24] There is no entry for the surname Pinour or Pynour (or other spelling variants of this name) in Black's (1946) *The Surnames of Scotland*. This surname and loan word would deserve further investigation.
[25] For example, in entry ARO-4-0495-03: *v kippes of hidis* (1447).
[26] The noun 'fraucht' is either borrowed from Middle Dutch or Middle Low German 'vracht' and is also found in English (see the entry for 'freight' in the Oxford English Dictionary: https://www-oed-com.bris.idm.oclc.org/view/Entry/74453?rskey=pZIC9V&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid).

ACR. Fewer terms referring to certain types of cloth, to measures and weights, and to miscellaneous items can be found.

With regard to the miscellaneous category, the most common Middle Dutch loan word is ‘upmak’ (literally: to make up), which is used 20 times between 1492 and 1509 and usually refers to the construction or repair of certain structures, as the following examples illustrate:

ARO-7-0390-01: *he sal bige and vpmak the said brig* (1493)

ARO-8-0594-01: *ande vpmak the portis of the toune ande clois' It quhar throw the toune may be kepit fra the contageous' plage of pestlence* (1506)

The term ‘rachter’ (for rafter, beam of wood), of which six instances can be found, occurs earlier on than ‘upmake’, namely in the years 1472, 1490, 1496, 1506, 1508, and 1509. The earliest example (ARO-6-0182-02) reads *iij rachtrys of burdys*. The use of the Scots plural marking *-ys* in “rachtrys” indicates that this lexical item had already been integrated into Scots by 1472. Three further lexical items from Murison’s miscellaneous category can be found in the ACR: ‘lak’, meaning disgrace, occurs twice (1445, 1457), while ‘crag’ for neck and ‘forehammer’ for a sledgehammer occur once each: *William sal Offir and present his Crag to the goyf* (1497, ARO-7-0783-02); *ane forhammir’ with ane hand’ hammir’* (1501, ARO-8-0032-01). It should also be pointed out that ‘Crag’ is a very common Scottish surname, occurring in about 450 entries.

Fewer loan words of Dutch/Flemish origin can be found in the semantic fields of cloth and weights or measures. The terms ‘cortrik’ (a kind of black velvet associated with Kortrijk), ‘haik’ (a woman’s mantle), and ‘birges’ (a kind of satin thread or cloth) appear once each in the following entries:

ARO-4-0090-07: *panni de cortrik* (1437)

ARO-4-0091-01: *panni vocati haik* (1437)

ARO-7-0030-01: *he deliueringe him fiwe flemis eln' of birgis gray* (1487)

The code-switching in the first two examples is interesting. Latin ‘pannus’ means a cloth or garment, indicating that the subsequent Middle Dutch loan words were not common enough to understand without the additional Latin information. Similarly, loan words of weights and measures are uncommon in the ACR. There is just one instance of ‘mutchkin’, which refers to three-quarters of a pint, in a list of measures: *ane half gallone ane quarte ane poynt ane chopin ane muchkin* (1493, ARO-7-0400-01).

The analysis of the Middle Dutch loan words listed by Murison reveals that the majority of lexical items were highly specialised and did not occur frequently in the ACR. In total, only 26.5 % of the words from Murison’s fourteenth and fifteenth-century lists are used in the ACR,

with no loan words occurring in the first two volumes, which are almost exclusively written in Latin (see Table 1). While Middle Dutch loan words are more common in Scots entries, there is also evidence of code-switching between Latin and the borrowed words of Middle Dutch origin, as the examples of 'cortrik' and 'haik' illustrate. Overall, it can be concluded that there is some influence of Middle Dutch on Scots in the ACR, but the borrowing is generally limited to a few specialised words (mostly trade and coinage) and the loan words are not particularly frequently used (the number of tokens of Middle Dutch loan words equates to 0.006 % of the overall ACR corpus). This, together with the lack of function words borrowed from Middle Dutch, provides evidence for the categorisation of the contact between Middle Dutch and Scots as "casual" on Thomason and Kaufman's (1988) borrowing scale. On the other hand, there is a possibility of slight structural borrowing (see compound formation in Scots) and two Middle Dutch loan words belong to Swadesh's (1972: 283) list of 'basic' words, i.e. they are less likely to be borrowed in casual contact situations ('crag' for neck and 'smook' for smoke). This points to a more intense language contact. It also must be considered that Middle Dutch loan words may have been used more frequently in everyday oral communication than in the ACR, which only allow insights into a formal, written register. Their use would have, of course, dependent on the context and speakers' backgrounds. Furthermore, loan words are not the only evidence for language contact between Scots and Middle Dutch in these records, as the following section will show.

4.2 Middle Dutch entries in the Aberdeen Council Registers (1398–1511)

As mentioned above, two entries in the ACR are written in Middle Dutch. These entries are provided with English translations by Gemmill and Frankot below. The first entry is a copy of an obligation by Walter Mychyels of Antwerp. This entry records the monetary debt of Walter Mychyels to John Vaus, who was alderman of Aberdeen. This money had to be paid to Vaus' children, who were at school in Paris at the time. The copy is dated 12 August 1446; the date of the original document is 30 July 1446. The second entry, which is dated 28 June 1481, notes that Philippus van den Have has been paid the debt by the baillie of Aberdeen.

> ID: ARO-5-0714-02 Date: 1446-08-12 Language: ndl
> Copia obligacionis Walteri michaelis de Andwarpia
> Ic Wouter mychyels kenne ende lyde dat ic sculdic byn Jon de vas ouldermaen
> van aberdyn van gherechtegher scult viij lib' g' vlems ~~gul ghels~~ ghels
> die teghelden en[de] to betalen ~~e~~ in paerys tuschen dit en[de] mamysse naest
> commende sonder erghenlyst / tot syne kynderen dewelke die daer now
> ter tit ligghen ter scoelen In ken[n]yssen der waereit so heb ic die voors'

Wouter mychiels dit ghescreue[n] met myns self hant en[de] gheseghelt
met myne eyghen syn[n]et Int Jaer ons heren dusent cccc xlvj den
trensten dach goelyns

Copy of the obligation of Walter Mychyels of Antwerp
I, Walter Mychyels, acknowledge and confess that I owe John de Vas, alderman of Aberdeen, in rightful debt eight pounds great, Flemish money, which have to be cashed and paid in Paris between this [date] and [Michaelmas?] next coming without fraud to his children who are now for the time being at school there. In acknowledgement of the truth so have I, the aforesaid Walter Mychiels, written this with my own hand and sealed with my own signet. In the year of Our Lord one thousand four hundred and forty six, the thirtieth day of July. (based on Gemmill's (2005: 107) translation).

ID: ARO-6-0691-04 Date: 1481-06-28 Language: ndl
It[em] so bekenne ick dat flippus' vame Haue
dat my de ballyun anders betalt heft van abberdyn
lxxxj

Item I, Philippus van den Have, confess that the baillie Anderson[?] of Aberdeen has paid me [14]81. (based on Frankot's (2018) translation).

The first entry is written by Walter Mychyels from Antwerp. Regarding the latter entry, Rutten (2018) points out that the short vowel suggested by "heft" [Engl. *has*] rather than "heeft" and "betalt" [Engl. *paid*] rather than "betaelt" or "betaalt" is a southern feature, particular to the Antwerp area. This feature can also be found in Mychyels' entry in "vlems" [Engl. *Flemish*] rather than "vlaems". On the other hand, Rutten also states that "perhaps 90 % of the items are already supra-regional in this period". Donaldson (1983: 95), too, believes that some standardisation in Middle Dutch had already taken place in the Middle Ages due to trading links between cities in the Netherlands and other Hansa cities in northern Germany and the Baltic. Still, the shortening of vowels led Rutten to the conclusion that both texts may be from Brabant (Antwerp area) or East Flanders.

More importantly, both entries are not accompanied by Scots or Latin translations or glosses, which suggests that Middle Dutch was understood by certain people who used the ACR. It should, however, be pointed out that the Middle Dutch entry from 1481 is written in a different hand than the entries immediately preceding and following this entry, possible by Philippus van der Have himself. This suggests that the clerks in Aberdeen, who were tasked with the record-keeping, were not confident in writing down a short entry in Middle Dutch. While Aberdonian town clerks may have not been familiar with Middle Dutch, it must also be noted that there are no other entries that are written in a language other than Latin or Scots (or

a combination of the two) in the first eight volumes of the ACR. This may be coincidence, or it may suggest that Middle Dutch was more prevalent than, for example, German or French. The existence of these Middle Dutch entries, together with the analysis of Middle Dutch loan words, and the wider sociohistorical context of the contact to people from the Low Countries lead to the following conclusion.

5 Conclusion

Determining the intensity of contact between Middle Dutch and Scots is not straightforward. Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 74–76) present a borrowing scale in distinct categories, which provides a good point of reference to describe specific language contact situations. As Thomason (2001: 71) points out, this borrowing scale is "a matter of probabilities, not possibilities", meaning that the predictions made can be violated. The borrowing of basic vocabulary, such as body parts, is listed as a characteristic of more intense contact (the third category on Thomason and Kaufman's borrowing scale). One such lexical item ('crag' for *neck*) was borrowed from Middle Dutch into Scots and is used in the ACR. All other loan words in the ACR are, however, non-basic and rather specialised words, mostly referring to terms of trade and coinage. Overall, only 26.5 % of the words from Murison's (1971) fourteenth and fifteenth century lists of Middle Dutch loan words occur in the ACR, reflecting a more casual contact than the borrowing of 'crag' would suggest. Furthermore, Murison only lists content words (the majority of which are nouns) and no examples of function words being borrowed from Middle Dutch into Scots were found in secondary literature. Structural borrowing, too, seems to be minor (possibly due to the close relatedness between Scots and Middle Dutch), with the only example being provided by Murison (1971: 172), who hypothesises that the formation of compounds in Scots may be influenced by Middle Dutch. On the other hand, the two Middle Dutch entries in the ACR and the fact that all other entries are either in Latin and/or Scots reflect the close links between Aberdeen and the Low Countries, so do the relatively frequent references to place names in the Low Countries, particularly to Bruges (Sluis) and Veere. References in the ACR to people hailing from the Low Countries can be found from 1399 onwards. According to Brown (2019: 149), Flemish immigrants integrated quickly and peacefully in Scotland. While some settled in Flemish settlements, others lived in the burghs, where they were a minority among Scots speakers. Given their quick and peaceful integration,

immigrants from the Low Countries were probably bilingual in Scots and Middle Dutch or shifted to Scots altogether.

Taking the length of the contact between Scotland and the Low Countries, which started in the second half of the eleventh century, but also the nature of the contact (Middle Dutch speakers were in the minority and not socio-politically dominant in Scotland) and its effect on Scots into account, the contact between Middle Dutch and Scots in Aberdeen can be classified somewhere between "casual contact" and "slightly more intense contact" (but closer to the latter), based on Thomason and Kaufman's (1988) borrowing scale. Given that not all aspects of these particular categories are met (e.g. no Middle Dutch function words were borrowed into Scots, but there are two instances of basic words being borrowed, which is listed as a characteristic of "more intense contact"), it seems more appropriate to view Thomason and Kaufman's scale as a continuum rather than strict and distinct categories. Still, their scale remains a helpful reference to assess language contact situations and the influence of particular languages, as this article has shown.

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